Dwight T. Albatross's
THE GOON
NOIR
DARK HORSE 20 YEARS
$2.99 U.S.
2 of 3
Eric Powell '06
JOHN ARCUDI • KEVIN NOWLAN
ROGER LANGRIDGE • SCOTT ALLIE
TODD HERMAN • HILARY BARTA
THOMAS SNIEGOSKI and ERIC POWELL
DIRECT SALES
00211

Dwight T. Albatross

PRESENTS

THE GOON

NOIR #2 (of 3)

"Man of the Hour"

Story by John Arcudi

Art and Lettering by Kevin Nowlan

"Rag and Bone"

Story and Art by Roger Langridge

"Knee-Deep in the Blues"

Story by Scott Allie Art By Todd Herman

Letters by Blambot's Nate Piekos

"Wanted: Undead or Alive"

Story and Art by Hilary Barta

The Little Unholy Bastards in "Peg Leg Full of Heaven" Part 2

Story by Thomas Sniegoski Art by Eric Powell

Letters by Blambot's Nate Piekos

edited by **Matt Dryer** designed by **Amy Arendts** published by **Mike Richardson**

Zombies provided by **Jethro and Earl Zombie Wranglerin' Inc.** and **The Adopt-a-Zombie Foundation**

Scandinavian Death Metal provided by **Scott Allie**

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♪ MY HEAD KEEPS SPINNING, I GO TO SLEEP GRINNING... ♫
IF THIS IS JUST THE BE—GINNING, MY LIFE IS GONNA BE BEEEEYOOOTIFUL...
♫ ♪
GOT ME SUNSHINE ENOUGH TO SPREAD... ♪
Dapper Dan
ER DAN'S POMADE
SERIOUSLY, FOLKS... YOU
THE ONLY OTHER WISE
AM I RIGHT, OR AM I
HUH?
♫ AND IT'S JUST LIKE THAT FELLA SAID... ♪

STORY·BY·JOHN·ARCUDI / ART·BY·KEVIN·NOWLAN

man of the hour

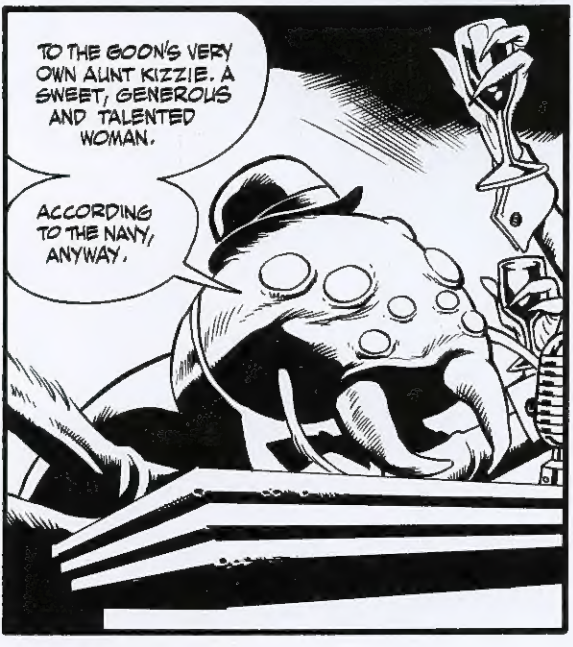
BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS, YOU HAVE TO LOVE THE GUY.
OTHERWISE, HE'LL RIP YOUR *$#@&% GUTS OUT THROUGH YOUR ASS.!
PRIVATE PARTY 2 NITE
CONGRATS, GOON, ON YOUR "BATMAN BLACK and WHITE" RIP-OFF BOOK
AM I RIGHT, OR AM I RIGHT? HUH? HUH?
HAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA
HA HA HA
SO GOON...
YOU ENJOYING YOUR TASTY ICE CREAM SUNDAE?
I SWEAR, I NEVER MET NOBODY WHO LOVES ICE CREAM AS MUCH AS THIS GUY--
--OVER THE AGE OF TWELVE.!
AHAHAHAHAA
HA HA HA
LIKE A LITTLE BABY, HE IS.!

NO, NO. I KID. REALLY, THE GOON'S ALL MAN.
JUST ASK THE 78 YEAR OLD LADY WHO SAVED HIS ASS IN A FIGHT.
HA HA-- OH, YES, IT'S TRUE. I WAS THERE!
SO, SO FUNNY!
HEY, THAT AIN'T HOW IT HAPPENED... EXACTLY.
GRRRRR.
AND EVERYBODY KNOWS THE GOON'S PARTNER, FRANKY.
TAKE A BOW, FRANKY. CHRIST KNOWS YOU ALREADY TOOK THE SILVERWARE.
UH HUH. FRANKY AND GOON. INSEPARABLE "PARTNERS" TO THE END.
AND FROM WHAT I HEAR, IN THE END.

HUH?
HOOHA HAHAHAHA
HOO HAHAHAH

I GET IT. I GET IT.
THEY'S HOMOS!!
HAHAHA
HAHAH
HA HA HA

HEY!
NOW, THAT AIN'T RIGHT.
YOU'RE TELLIN' ME.
AND NOW, I'D LIKE TO PROPOSE A TOAST.


TO THE GOON'S VERY OWN AUNT KIZZIE. A SWEET, GENEROUS AND TALENTED WOMAN.
ACCORDING TO THE NAVY, ANYWAY.

THAT'S IT.

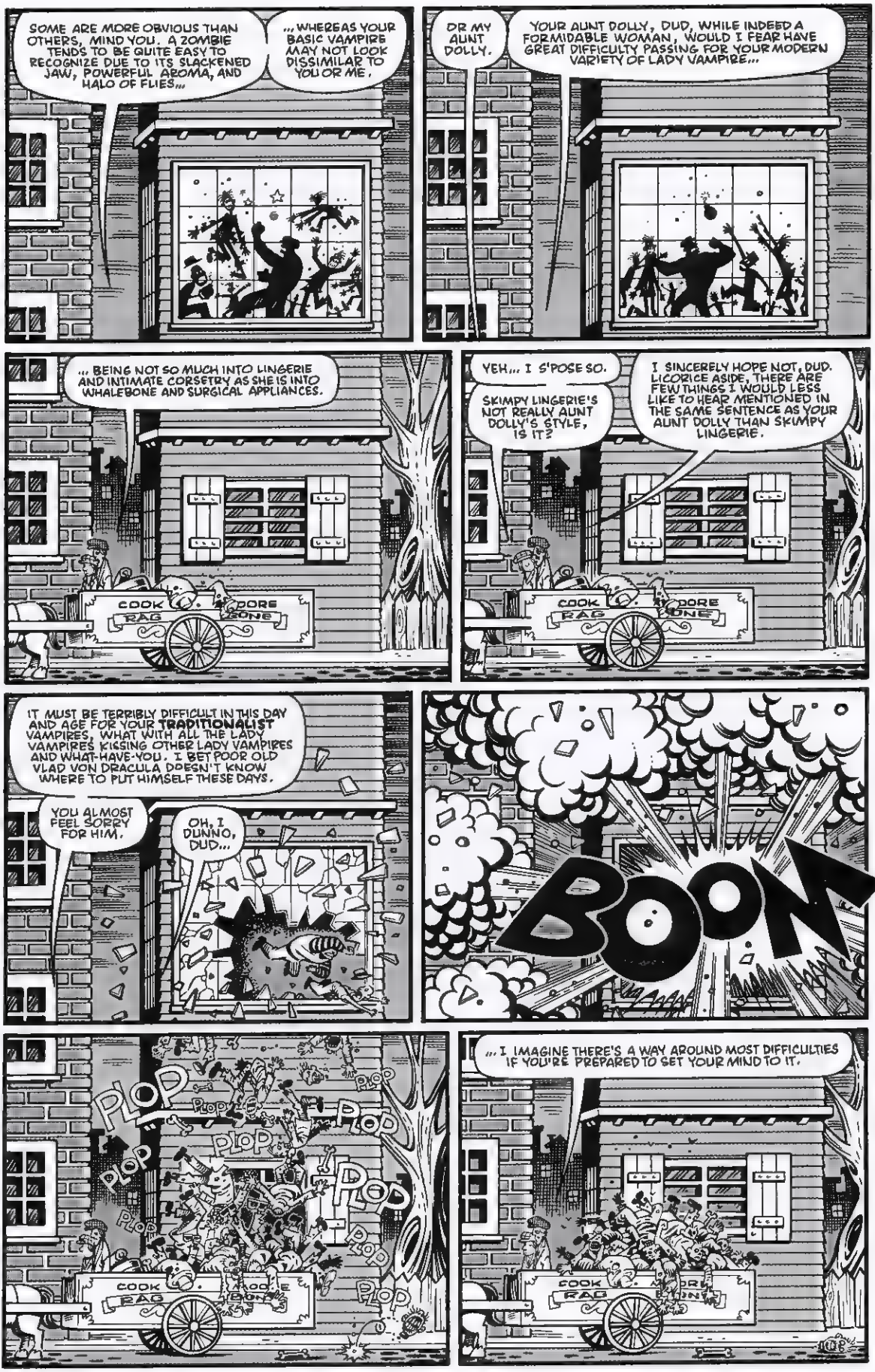
YARRRRRRRAAGH!
EEK!
I'M AFRAID YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, MY DEAR FELLOW. THIS IS A *ROAST.*
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE FUNNY.
GGKKK GUGK
WHAM
NOW IT'S FUNNY.

OKAY, RIGHT OFF, LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT./ I AM NOT, YOU KNOW ONE OF THOSE GUYS.
YEAH, ME AND GOON, WE LIVE TOGETHER-- NO, NO, WHAT I MEAN IS, WE LIVE IN THE SAME HOUSE, SURE--BUT WE'RE JUST FRIENDS.
YOU KNOW, LIKE CARY GRANT AND RANDOLPH SCOTT.
UHF./ #@%+*!, YOU WUZ RIGHT. I SHOULDN'T'A ATE THE MEAT LOAF.
I HAS SOME BRIOSCHI™ IN THE CAR.
NORTON'S HALL
the end

... SO I SAYS TO 'IM, I SAYS, "UTE LEMPER, MYARSE."
I SHOULD FINK SO. TAKING ADVANTAGE, THAT IS.
QUITE SO, DUD. ALL RATHER IMMATERIAL NOW THE RENT ON THE HORSE IS DUE, MIND.
THWAK
TOO RIGHT, PETE.
UNFORTUNATELY, HAVIN' EXAMINED THE MATTER, I FEEL DRAWN TO THE INEVITABLE CONCLUSION THAT WE ARE, NOT TO PUT TOO FINE A POINT ON IT, SKINT.
STOCK, DUD. RAGS AND BONES. THESE ARE THE COMMODITIES WHICH WE ARE SORELY LACKING.
WITH SUFFICIENT QUANTITIES OF THESE ITEMS OUR ABSENCE OF MONETARY SUBSTANCES WOULD BE WELL AND TRULY OVER.
PAF THUD
COOK - MOORE RAG & BONE
THWOK
HMM.
YOU KNOW...
KRASH
... I'M QUITE SURE THIS WAS A CEMETERY LAST TIME I WAS HERE.
LONELY ST.
COOK - MOORE RAG & BONE
RAG and BONE
A GOON CARTOON
by ROGER LANGRIDGE

SO WHERE IS IT, THEN? BIT HARD TO JUST LOSE A CEMETERY, INNIT?
I EXPECT MY NAVIGATIONAL EXPERTISE WAS SOMEWHAT BLUNTED BY THE ROILING PLUMES OF FOG THROUGH WHICH WE SO RECENTLY PASSED, DUD.
COOK MOORE
ROILING PLUMES WILL DO THAT EVERY TIME, PETE.
YOU DON'T WANT TO GO MESSING WITH ROILING PLUMES IF YOU CAN POSSIBLY AVOID IT. KEEP YOUR ROILING PLUMES TO YOURSELF, I ALWAYS SAY.
BLANG
SHAME ABOUT THE CEMETERY, ANYWAY.
I RECKON I KNOW WHAT YOU WERE FINKING, PETE. I RECKON YOU WERE FINKING, "WHY NOT DIG UP A STIFF OR TWO?" NAHAHAHAHAHA
THUD
WHUMP
NOTHING WRONG WITH RAISING THE ODD STIFF, DUD. NOT IF YOU'RE DISCREET AND PROFESSIONAL ABOUT IT.
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR RAGS AND BONES, A STIFF IS ALMOST CERTAINLY LIKELY TO BE YOUR FIRST PORT OF CALL.
WHEN TIMES ARE HARD, GET ME A STIFF, I ALWAYS SAY.
THAT'S CALLED A SINGLE ENTENDRE, DUD, IF YOU'RE WONDERING.
AND WHO'S GONNA KNOW?
QUITE SO, DUD.
OF COURSE, THAT DOESN'T NECESSARILY APPLY IN THE CASE OF THE UNDEAD...
...WHO I IMAGINE MIGHT HAVE STRONG OPINIONS ON THE MATTER.
COOK MOORE
RAG & BONE

UNDEAD, PETE?
YES, DUD. THE UNDEAD. THOSE WHOSE TIME IN THE GRAVE IS RUDELY CURTAILED BY FORCES BEYOND OUR KEN.
A LOT OF THOSE ABOUT, ARE THERE?
VERY DIFFICULT TO SAY, DUD. THEY DON'T EXACTLY POP UP IN THE OFFICIAL STATISTICS, THOSE WHO COLLECT SUCH INFORMATION HAVING FOOLISHLY NEGLECTED TO INCLUDE THE QUESTION "ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE LEGIONS OF THE LIVING DEAD" ON THE FORMS.
RATHER SHORTSIGHTEDLY, IN MY HUMBLE OPINION.
WELL THEN. THAT'S A BIT OF A WORRY, INNIT?
HOW SO, DUD?
WELL, IF THERE'S NO OFFICIAL RECORD, THESE LEGIONS OF THE UNDEAD COULD BE ANYONE, COULDN'T THEY? COULD BE MY AUNT DOLLY FOR ALL I KNOW.
COOK MOORE
INDEED, DUD. KNOWING YOUR AUNT DOLLY AS I DO, I CAN EASILY SEE HOW THE CONFUSION MIGHT ARISE.
ESPECIALLY IF SHE'S BEEN EATING LICORICE AGAIN WITHOUT PUTTING IN HER FALSE TEETH.
I REMEMBER, DUD, I REMEMBER. I NEARLY SOILED MY UNMENTIONABLES ON THE VERY SPOT.
BUT THERE IS ONE FOOLPROOF METHOD OF RECOGNIZING A MEMBER OF THE DIFFERENTLY VITAL, DUD.
WHAT'S THAT, PETE?
GLOM
IT'S THE WAY THE CADAVERS FOLLOW YOU AROUND THE ROOM.


SOME ARE MORE OBVIOUS THAN OTHERS, MIND YOU. A ZOMBIE TENDS TO BE QUITE EASY TO RECOGNIZE DUE TO ITS SLACKENED JAW, POWERFUL AROMA, AND HALO OF FLIES...
...WHEREAS YOUR BASIC VAMPIRE MAY NOT LOOK DISSIMILAR TO YOU OR ME.
DR MY AUNT DOLLY.
YOUR AUNT DOLLY, DUD, WHILE INDEED A FORMIDABLE WOMAN, WOULD I FEAR HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY PASSING FOR YOUR MODERN VARIETY OF LADY VAMPIRE...
...BEING NOT SO MUCH INTO LINGERIE AND INTIMATE CORSETRY AS SHE IS INTO WHALEBONE AND SURGICAL APPLIANCES.
YEH... I S'POSE SO.
SKIMPY LINGERIE'S NOT REALLY AUNT DOLLY'S STYLE, IS IT?
I SINCERELY HOPE NOT, DUD. LICORICE ASIDE, THERE ARE FEW THINGS I WOULD LESS LIKE TO HEAR MENTIONED IN THE SAME SENTENCE AS YOUR AUNT DOLLY THAN SKIMPY LINGERIE.
COOK RAG
IT MUST BE TERRIBLY DIFFICULT IN THIS DAY AND AGE FOR YOUR **TRADITIONALIST** VAMPIRES, WHAT WITH ALL THE LADY VAMPIRES KISSING OTHER LADY VAMPIRES AND WHAT-HAVE-YOU. I BET POOR OLD VLAD VON DRACULA DOESN'T KNOW WHERE TO PUT HIMSELF THESE DAYS.
YOU ALMOST FEEL SORRY FOR HIM.
OH, I DUNNO, DUD...
BOOM
PLOP
...I IMAGINE THERE'S A WAY AROUND MOST DIFFICULTIES IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SET YOUR MIND TO IT.

I RECKON WE TOOK A WRONG TURN BY THAT SCHOOL WHAT WAS ON FIRE.
THAT'S ENTIRELY POSSIBLE, DUD, AND IN FACT I WAS CONSIDERING HEADING BACK THAT WAY AT THIS VERY JUNCTURE.

ASSUMING WE CAN FIND IT AGAIN AND IT AIN'T BURNED DOWN ALREADY.
I EXPECT THE ROILING PLUMES WILL BE ADEQUATE TO ASCERTAIN ITS FORMER WHEREABOUTS, DUD.

ALMOST WISH I HADN'T STARTED THE FIRE IN THE FIRST PLACE, PETS.

THOSE BRICKS WERE WINDING YOU UP, DUD. I FEEL YOU DID THE RIGHT THING UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

MY NOSE ITCHES.
END

KNEEDEEP IN THE BLUES
ALLIE • HERMAN • PIEKOS
GRRR!
DAGNAB SLACK-JAW!
FRANKIE-- I DUNNO--
NORTON'S PUB
KRASSH
--WHY YOU CALL THEM SLACK-JAWS--
--WHEN THEY HAVE SUCH A TIGHT GRIP!
ALLIE!

WHATCHA GOT THERE, WILLY--A TROPHY?
"TROPHY"--?
THIS IS MINE!
YOU THINK THESE SLACKJAWS SMELL BAD, YOU WANNA STAY OUTTA THERE...
HEY WILLY, I THINK THIS IS YOURS TOO.
WHAT AM I GONNA DO NOW? THIS WAS MY LIVELIHOOD!
CAN'T YOU GET A NEW ONE?

HE MEANS HIS ARM, SHORTY!
?!?!
WELL-- HOW 'BOUT "USED"?
DIDN'T THEY JUST BURY THAT GUY WHO WROTE "V.D. BLUES"?
WAP
YOU KNOW, HE SANG IN THE GRAND OLE OPRY ONE--
A DEAD MAN'S ARM?
SURE, I'VE SEEN ZOMBIES SWAP HEADS, WHY CAN'T YOU--
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU--? I'M NOT A ZOMBIE!
WHAT WAS HIS NAME?

HUGH FENNY SCROGGINS
THEY ALL SAID GO FOR IT
UHF!
CRAK
SC
THEY
GO F
THERE YOU ARE-- ALL SEWN UP, WILL.
ABOUT TIME!
WOULD'VE BEEN A LOT LONGER IF I'D DONE IT MANUALLY, LIKE YOU WANTED!
WILLY SOUNDS BETTER THAN EVER.
I'M NOT MUCH FOR MUSIC.
SMACK ME WITH A PAPER LIKE A MUTT, WILL YA?!
FIN

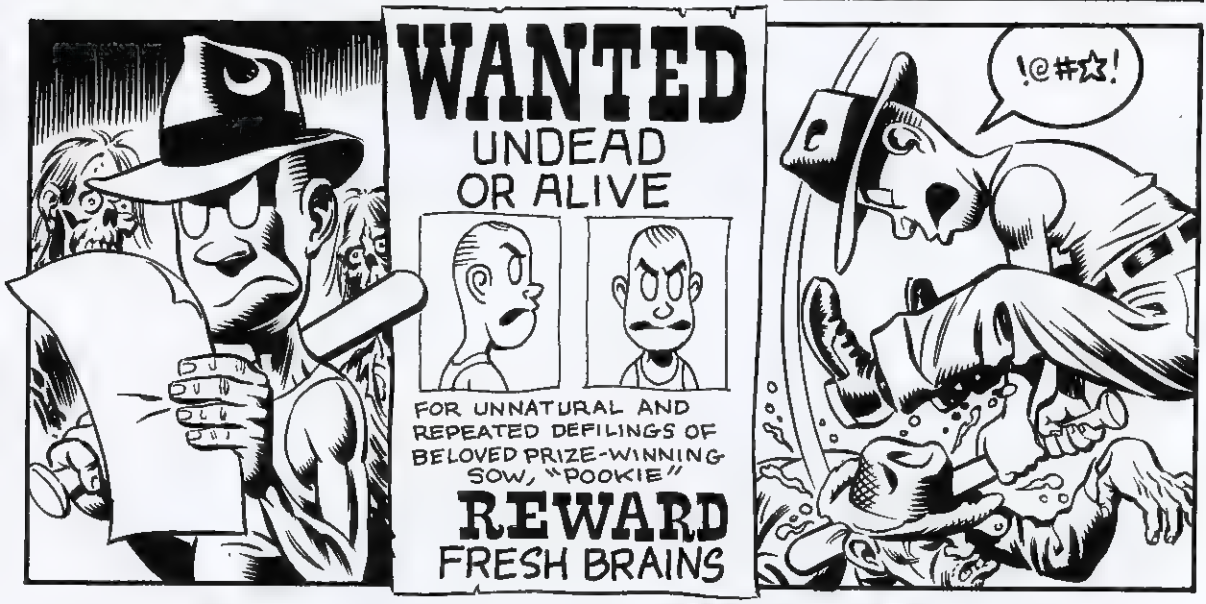
A Little Something
for the Ladies . . .

WANTED

WANTED

WAN
IDE
JOR
WAN
IDE
JOR
WAN
IDE
JOR

WANTED
WANTED
DEAD
ALIVE



REAP WHAT YOU SOW

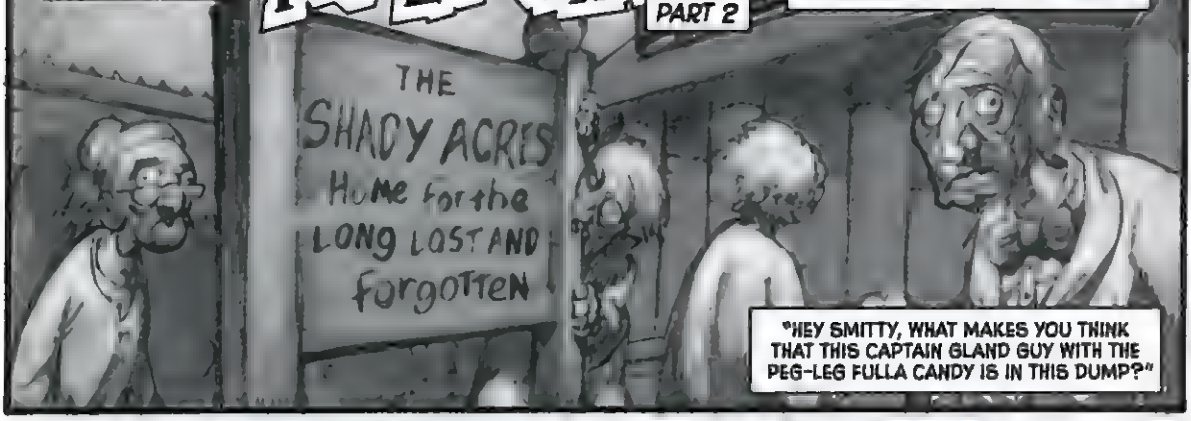
By Hilary Barta

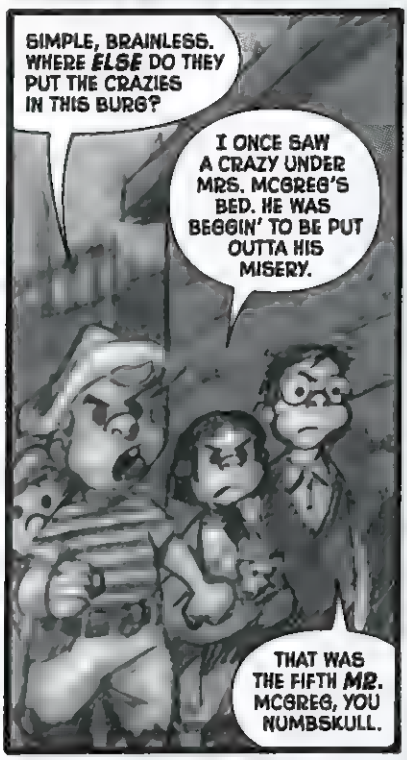
THE LITTLE UNHOLY BASTARDS IN...

Peg-Leg Full of Heaven

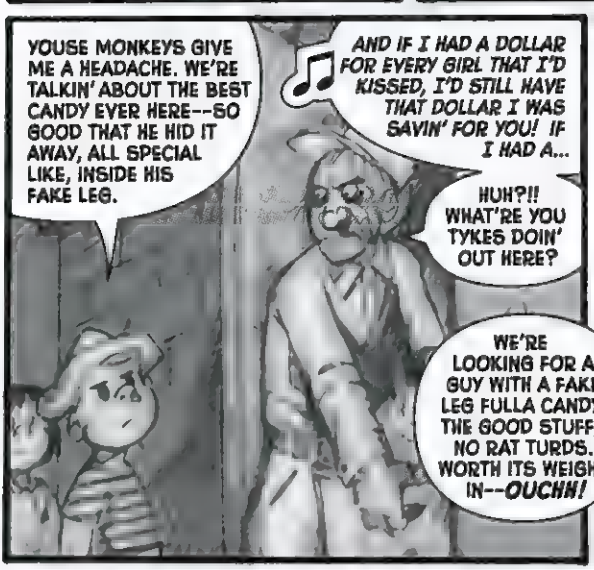
PART 2

ART BY ERIC "FROGGY" POWELL
STORY BY TOM "DARLA" SNIEGOSKI
LETTERS BY NATE "BUTCH" PIEKOS


THE
SHADY ACRES
Home for the
LONG LOST AND
Forgotten
"HEY SMITTY, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT THIS CAPTAIN GLAND GUY WITH THE PEG-LEG FULLA CANDY IS IN THIS DUMP?"


SIMPLE, BRAINLESS. WHERE ELSE DO THEY PUT THE CRAZIES IN THIS BURG?
I ONCE SAW A CRAZY UNDER MRS. MCGREG'S BED. HE WAS BEGGIN' TO BE PUT OUTTA HIS MISERY.
THAT WAS THE FIFTH MR. MCGREG, YOU NUMBSKULL.

YEAH, HOPE THIS AIN'T ANY OF DAT FANCY HOO-HA WIT THE NUT-COVERED DRIED FRUIT THAT LOOKS LIKE RAT TURDS.
I ATE A RAT TURD ONCE. WASN'T AS BAD AS YOU'D THINK.


YOUSE MONKEYS GIVE ME A HEADACHE. WE'RE TALKIN' ABOUT THE BEST CANDY EVER HERE--SO GOOD THAT HE HID IT AWAY, ALL SPECIAL LIKE, INSIDE HIS FAKE LEG.
AND IF I HAD A DOLLAR FOR EVERY GIRL THAT I'D KISSED, I'D STILL HAVE THAT DOLLAR I WAS SAVIN' FOR YOU! IF I HAD A...
HUH?!! WHAT'RE YOU TYKES DOIN' OUT HERE?
WE'RE LOOKING FOR A GUY WITH A FAKE LEG FULLA CANDY. THE GOOD STUFF, NO RAT TURDS. WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN--OUCHH!

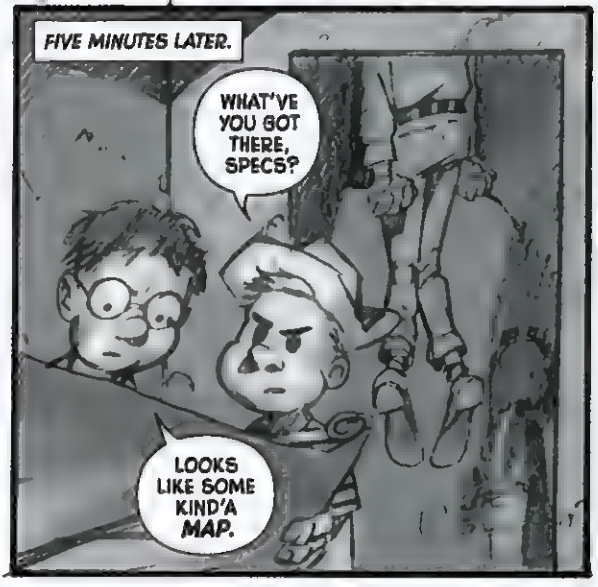
PUT A SOCK IN IT, SMALL FRY.
SWAP!
WE WAS JUST HOPING TO BRING A LITTLE JOY TO THE SICK AND UNFORTUNATE, SIR. WOULD THERE BE ANY INSIDE PERHAPS?

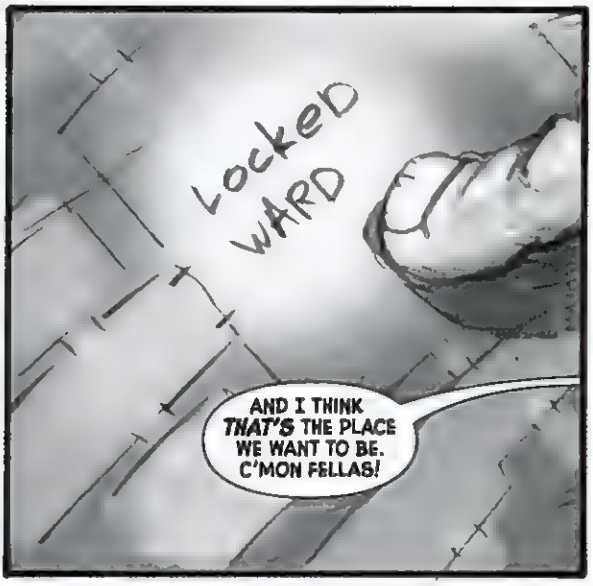
SICK AND UNFORTUNATES? WE'RE JUST *LOADED* TO THE GILLS WITH SICK AND UNFORTUNATES. WHY DON'T YOU *DELICIOUS* LOOKING EXAMPLES OF YOUTH COME INSIDE AND I'LL SHOW THEM TO YOU.

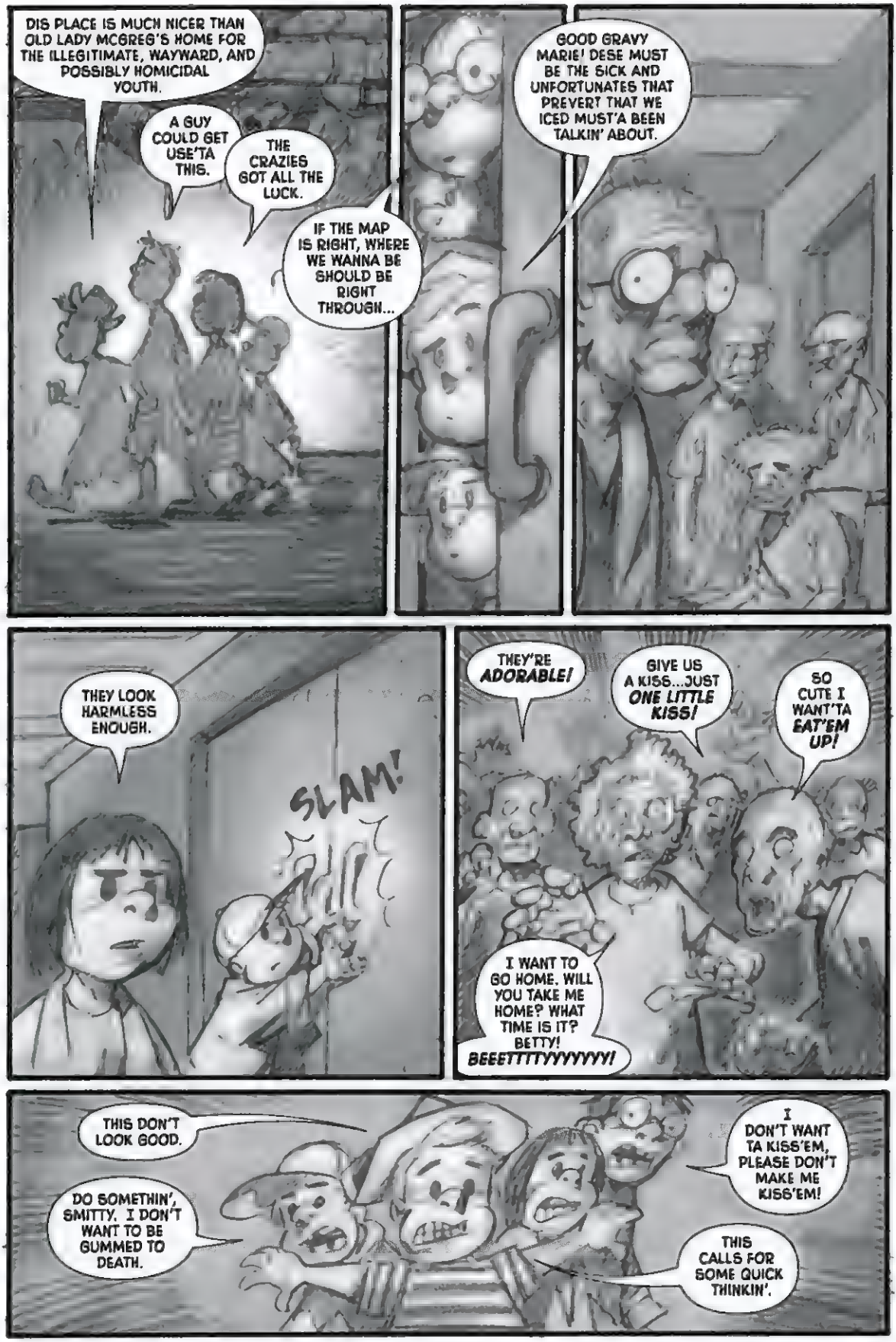
NICE PLACE YOU GOT HERE, HOMEY.
SMELLS LIKE PEE.
THANKS FOR THE HOSPITALITY, MISTER. SO, WHERE ARE THOSE SICK AND UNFORTUNATES YOU WAS TALKIN ABOUT?
WE'LL GET TO THEM IN A MINUTE, BUT FIRST WHY DON'T WE ALL SLIP OUT OF OUR WET THINGS BEFORE WE CATCH OUR DEATH.

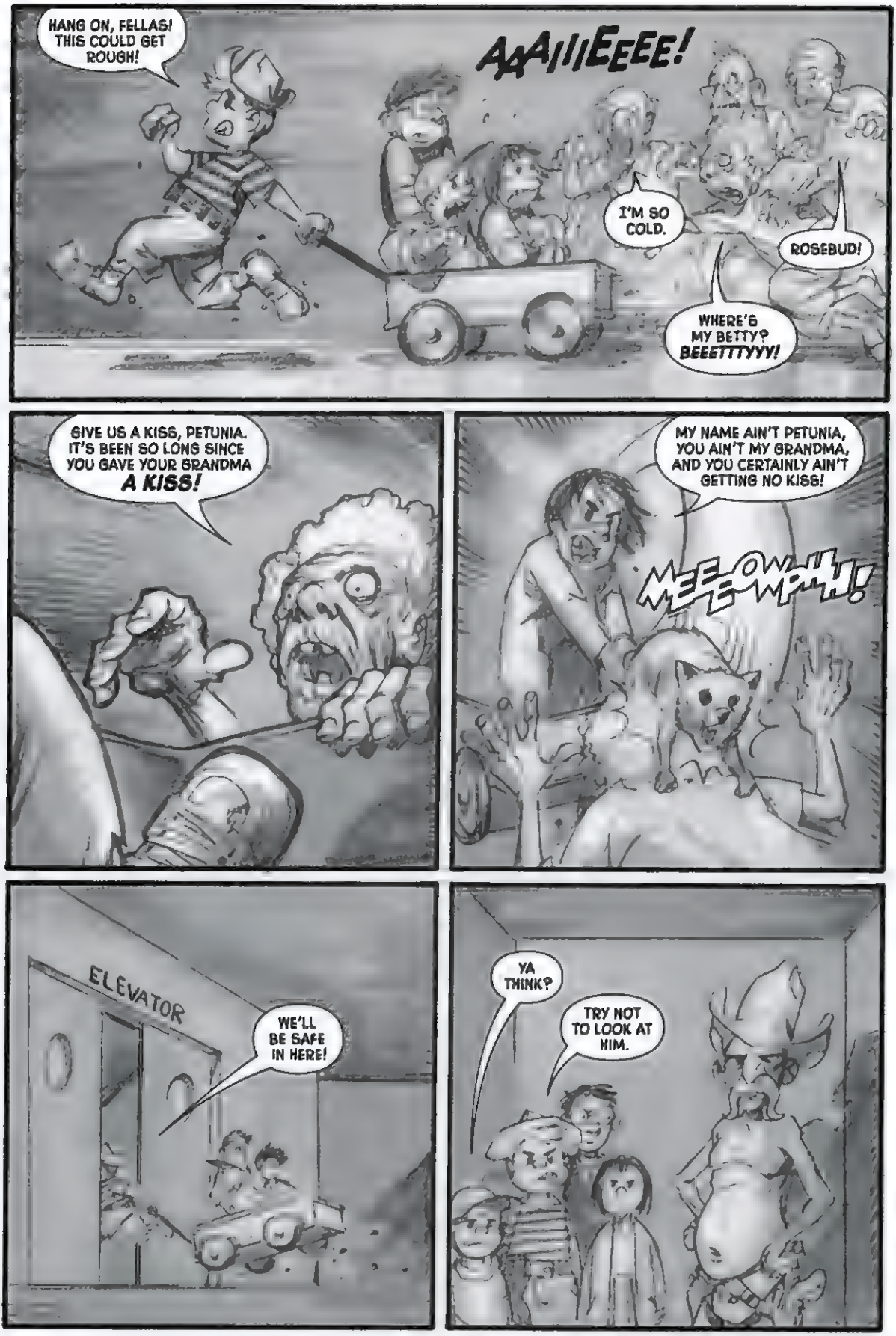
HEY, WAIT JUST ONE MINUTE. YOU AIN'T ONE'A THEM GUYS THAT I *THINK* YOU ARE, ARE YOU?
A REPUBLICAN?
NAW, I THINK HE'S ONE OF DEM *PREVERTS*. AND WHAT DID MRS. MCGREG SAY WE SHOULD DO IF WE WAS TA EVER RUN ACROSS ONE OF THEM?

WE KILL 'EM!


FIVE MINUTES LATER.
WHAT'VE YOU GOT THERE, SPECS?
LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND'A *MAP.*


LOCKED WARD
AND I THINK *THAT'S* THE PLACE WE WANT TO BE. C'MON FELLAS!


DIS PLACE IS MUCH NICER THAN OLD LADY MCGREG'S HOME FOR THE ILLEGITIMATE, WAYWARD, AND POSSIBLY HOMICIDAL YOUTH.
A GUY COULD GET USE'TA THIS.
THE CRAZIES GOT ALL THE LUCK.
IF THE MAP IS RIGHT, WHERE WE WANNA BE SHOULD BE RIGHT THROUGH...
GOOD GRAVY MARIE! DESE MUST BE THE SICK AND UNFORTUNATES THAT PREVERT THAT WE ICED MUST'A BEEN TALKIN' ABOUT.
THEY LOOK HARMLESS ENOUGH.
SLAM!
THEY'RE ADORABLE!
GIVE US A KISS...JUST ONE LITTLE KISS!
SO CUTE I WANT'TA EAT'EM UP!
I WANT TO GO HOME. WILL YOU TAKE ME HOME? WHAT TIME IS IT? BETTY! BEEETTTTYYYYYYY!
THIS DON'T LOOK GOOD.
DO SOMETHIN', SMITTY. I DON'T WANT TO BE GUMMED TO DEATH.
I DON'T WANT TA KISS'EM, PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME KISS'EM!
THIS CALLS FOR SOME QUICK THINKIN'.


HANG ON, FELLAS! THIS COULD GET ROUGH!
AAAIIIEEEE!
I'M SO COLD.
ROSEBUD!
WHERE'S MY BETTY? BEEETTTYYY!
GIVE US A KISS, PETUNIA. IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE YOU GAVE YOUR GRANDMA A KISS!
MY NAME AIN'T PETUNIA, YOU AIN'T MY GRANDMA, AND YOU CERTAINLY AIN'T GETTING NO KISS!
MEEOWW MEOWMPHH!
ELEVATOR
WE'LL BE SAFE IN HERE!
YA THINK?
TRY NOT TO LOOK AT HIM.

THEY'RE WILD TODAY. WONDER WHAT'S GOT THEM SO RILED UP. IT'S EXTRA TRANQUILIZERS IN THE GRUEL TONIGHT.
SORRY ABOUT THIS, SPORT. BUT I'VE GOTTA HIDE BEFORE THAT MANIAC FINDS ME.
KLANG
AND THIS LOOKS TO BE JUST THE PLACE.
SHADY ACRES RECEPTION DESK
SAINTS PRESERVE US.
I WAS WONDERIN' IF I MIGHT HAVE A LOOK AROUND.

END OF PART TWO!

Ask ALBATROSS

Check out *The Goon* online at www.darkhorse.com and www.thegoon.com

goonmail@aol.com or write to us at GOONMAIL, c/o Dark Horse Comics, 10956 SE Main Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222

Welcome, readers, to the second glorious issue of *Dwight T. Albatross's Goon: Noir*! While you can clearly see the improvement the *Goon* comics have made since I so graciously took it upon myself to lend a hand, I have some disturbing news that unfortunately puts a damper on my otherwise overwhelming enjoyment of this sensational book that I alone have put together. With great regret, I have to inform you that Mr. Eric Powell is missing and may be a danger to himself and others. For his own benefit, I had secluded Powell from the public. Detaining him, if you will, at an undisclosed location. Now I know how this sounds, but trust me. This was only done so that that loafer Powell could stay focused on finishing *The Goon: Chinatown* and the *Mystery of Mr. Thistle* graphic novel. And all of my detention methods were veterinarian approved. Anyway, Powell somehow chewed his way out of there. So if you see this man:

. . . please contact me via the correspondence info listed above as quickly as possible. And absolutely do not try to speak to Powell directly, contact any law enforcement officials, friends of Powell's, or any of his family members. Let's keep this in-house, people. No need to make a big deal out of it. But if you get a chance to sneak up behind him and hit him with a pipe, knocking him unconscious until I can safely arrive and secure him, please do so.

I have no hard evidence as to Powell's whereabouts at this time. But I have confirmed some sporadic sightings in the Atlanta area.

A woman attending the Atlanta Dragon*Con was apparently marked up on her butt by some person matching Powell's description. Now I know what you're thinking. I, too, took Powell for a closet homo. What would he be doing that close to a woman's ass? But look at how crappy that drawing is. It has to be Powell.

After my Atlanta leads ran dry, the only credible sightings came out of Baltimore. Where apparently

Powell was signing bats and wrenches and handing them out to teenage hooligans.

Unfortunately, the trail has since run dry. Keep your eyes open, people. Now some mail.

Eric,

In July I sat for the Virginia Bar Exam. As you can well imagine, this is an incredibly stressful experience for the test-taker as well as anyone who is unfortunate enough to have to interact with the test-taker during the preparation period . . .

Anyway . . . thanks to the *Goon* TPBs that I purchased before the exam I was able to make it through this experience without killing anyone. The Goon, and especially Frankie, were a humorous and relaxing change from torts, wills, and divorces. My wife thanks you as well for creating something that took my mind off the stress.

Thanks again!
Scott Spencer
University Registrar
Marymount University

You're welcome, Scott, but you must be mistaken. The *Goon: Noir* trade paperback hasn't been released yet. This is only the second issue. Surely you didn't enjoy the other *Goon* trades. They were by Powell. And just for curiosity's sake, what would be the best line of defense against kidnapping and assault charges? No reason I'm asking. Just curious.

Fellow Goonanites . . . Goonians? Goonophiles? Yeah, Goonophiles! I hope this message finds its way back to the right time. In July of 2006, I had the joyful honor of attending the San Diego Comic-Con—and let me tell you, it was fantastical! So many things to do and to see. Of course, the crown jewel in the scepter of my weekend was to be finally meeting the legendary Eric Powell himself. How long had I eagerly awaited finally meeting the creator of one of the greatest comics of our day? Oh, the electric anticipation as the time drew near to see, with my own eyes, the renowned Powell. A firsthand look at the man himself, getting the inside scoop on the coming adventures of the Goon, perusing the original artwork, acquiring some curious T-shirts, perhaps landing a sketch or two.

But to the point, as my time in this electronic gateway is fleeting at best. As most *Goon* fans may know, the existence of the infamous Dwight T. Albatross is disputable at best. Many readers harbor the notion that he is but a pseudonym for Powell himself, an alter ego, or even an outright fabrication. But let me tell you, Goonophiles (yes, that's definitely the right one), the shock I felt as I finally navigated my way to the Eric Powell booth only to be greeted by the notorious Dwight himself! There he was, standing attentively yet apprehensively, eyeing the crowd that—for the most part—seemed to barely acknowledge his presence, or at least his identity. When I found myself in a full-on dumbstruck stare at the insidious Dwight T. Albatross himself, he locked his steely gaze (at least, through his intensely foreboding sunglasses) onto mine. Almost as if I were caught somewhere off-limits, I felt frozen in nervous apprehension as Dwight sidled up to me. I managed a quick peek behind the curtain, which left me ashen and visibly startled when I saw not Eric Powell, but THREE Powells mumbling to each other in what I later learned was Sanskrit. They quickly realized they had been spotted through the narrow slit in the curtains, and literally melted into a thin cloud of gray smoke, wafting away on the currents of the air-conditioned convention center. Dwight, clearly not wanting an inept interloper like myself to cause a panic, quickly put his arm around my shoulder and began to engage me in small talk as he guided me to the curtained-off area behind the booth.

Not really certain what exactly was happening, I helplessly followed along, unable to even utter a hoarse cry for help, as Dwight's seemingly innocuous conversation masked a spell that he was muttering under his breath, a spell that would ultimately lead to my departure from that realm—albeit with newfound knowledge about the reality of the present situation.

You see, fellow Goonanites (I think I'm starting to like that one better), it is not Albatross whose existence is speculative . . . it's Powell! There is no "Eric Powell," at least not as he's been presented to the loyal readership of the incredible adventures of the Goon. "Eric Powell" is

actually the disembodied spirits of seven ancient Pangaean carnival barkers. And the physical form you've all seen of him is simply an astral projection of a malevolent alien from the tenth planet in our solar system. Do you really think it's a coincidence that his name is an anagram for "El crow pile"? Dwight T. Albatross is the human interface of this operation, as he is the only one who has gained the trust of these entities. By the time Albatross offered me a burrito, which he claimed was from a local San Diego eatery, I was too disoriented to know any better. The burrito was, of course, an inter-dimensional wormhole, which is how I ended up in Al Capone's secure sub-basement (sometime in 1927, to my best estimation). Had I not been fortuitous enough to realize that the grizzled old hobo trapped down there with me was none other than Eli Whitney, it may have been the end for me. Even more fortunately, Whitney was still at the top of his mental game—trust me when I tell you that the cotton gin was the least menacing of his creations. And I should apologize now, as the resulting energy disruption in the fifth unified field of our galaxy unfortunately manifested itself as a blackout along most of the East Coast in the year 2003. A slight miscalculation on Eli's part.

Although this message is targeted to reach the physical point in the universe that our Earth will occupy in roughly the third quadrant of the year 2006, my own journey back to that same time looks to be much more arduous. If at all possible, your assistance—in the form of burying size twelve sneakers on a beach, preferably along the West Coast but any of the major continents would suffice (don't ask . . . it's so painfully obvious yet counter-intuitive)—would be greatly appreciated.

Hope to see you (any of you) soon,
Dave-O

You are a loon. But if Powell really didn't exist then . . . hey Mr. Spencer, can assault and kidnapping charges be filed by a fictitious person? I mean, if I could prove he was only a figment of my imagination? That could be an ingenious line of defense.

Dear Eric and Mr Dwight,

Well I am just writting to say well done and thankyou for such a wonderful book. Eric, your artwork and stories are amazing! You deserved every award you've ever been givin! Mr Dwight, your additions to the letters section are absolutly freakin hilarious, your a freakin retard, but your a funny retard. Keep up the good work guys.

Knife to da eye, etc, etc.
Matthew Slater
Australia

Retard?! I hope a kangaroo kicks you into a pool full of stingrays!

Eric,

If *The Goon* were actually a bag of breakfast, then Patton Oswalt would be a two-foot sausage link, or, as city folk prefer to say, he's damn funny. Y'all's knees are either red from prayin' to the Almighty, day in and out, or from slappin' 'em slippy from endless chuckles. Why not let Patton ride his cart around the ranch once more, with a short slab of wit, like that good-time goose from *Reno 911* did? How now, brown Powell? Take a bow!

Matt Strackbein
Longmont, Colorado

Oh, my knees are red, but not from praying! That Oswalt guy and the rest of them had me jumping through hoops just to get him to do a short story. Yeah, it was real funny when he got all his friends together to laugh at me. That sardine thing was really funny. Powell said I had to make these guys happy to get my own miniseries. So I did it. But you know what, Powell, I had my own little super-secret surveillance going on via hidden waitress booby-cam when you were telling Oswalt how funny it would be to run me down.

How you guys were laughing it up in that bar. Coming up with all your little jokey-joke stuff you were going to make me do. WASN'T SO FUNNY WHEN YOU HAD THAT DOG CHOKER ON, WAS IT, POWELL?! Oswalt and the *Reno 911* bunch! They don't hold a candle to Bill O'Reilly! That man has a rapier wit that puts those guys to shame! Bill, if you're listening, it's not too late! O'Reilly and Albatross will take the comics industry by storm!

Dear *Dwight T. Presents*,

It was awesome seeing Mike Ploog draw a *Goon* story! I've been a huge fan of his since his Marvel monster comics days. And I can't wait to see Kevin Nolan's story in the next issue! Thanks so much for getting these kickass guys to contribute on one of my favorite books.

John Norris

Yeah, whatever, dude. I don't even know who those guys are. Powell scribbled a bunch of artists he liked down on a piece of paper and handed it to that editor guy Matt Dryer. Once I found out there was no O'Reilly or Larry the Cable Guy, I didn't care much about who was in this thing. But whoever they get, it's better than Powell. I know my name is over the logo, and that makes it a *hundred* times better.

Hey Dwight,

Is it true you take complete credit for all of my hard work? And where the hell is Eric? Seriously. He's approving all of this?

Matt Dryer
Dark Horse Comics Editor

Shut your pie hole, Dryer! All you need to worry about is making sure my name is above the logo, my mug is splashed all over this book, and my royalty checks keep coming in. And what hard work? Do you mean thwarting my every creative decision at every turn? Ignoring my creator suggestions in favor of the ones Powell suggested before he went on hiatus? I'M IN CHARGE HERE! Where's my Carrot Top story?! Where's my Jimmy "JJ" Walker story?! I don't want to hear any more lame excuses from you, like "But they can't draw," Dryer! You just put a pen in JJ's hand and you know what you got? DYNO-MITE!!! Just look at issue number one. Patton Oswalt, Mike Ploog, Bill Morrison, Steve Niles, Ryan Sook, Thomas Sniegoski, and Eric Powell. Who are these guys? Nobodies. The only reason the book sold at all was because my face was on the cover. So you just keep your mouth shut and do what I tell you, little editor boy.

I just read issue 18 of the *Goon* which is absolutely brilliant. I hope you release the Sodomy issue and "duck" the censors. If people don't want to buy it then they have the choice but to deny it even getting into shops is shit and shows just how much time these sad "duck" have, and they have nothing better to do. I'm glad I live in Scotland where religion doesn't seem to carry so much weight. I think people should be free to practice what they believe but like I said, some people like to feel important by crusading for the common good but it's not like the crack dealers and the scumbags read the *Goon*, it's good honest hard working folk like me and I think I'm a good person so if reading that issue of the *Goon* means I'll burn in hell then bring it on. What a "duck" rant. Cheers.

Jon Reid

Hey, guess what, you Scottish heathen, I censored your letter. Everywhere you used the potty-mouth I wrote the word "duck." Suck on that.

Hello Dwight,

I recently attended San Diego Comic-Con and saw you at the Goon booth. Not only did you have a ridiculous haircut and a wannabe-Village People-groupie handlebar mustache, but you had tattoos of Darth Vader and Yoda on your arms. Is Chewie on your balls?

Sincerely,
Deric O'Reilly Howell

P.S. What does it sound like when doves cry? Does it sound like the squeal of a Sand Person when a big hairy Wampa is giving it to him hard, fast, and without mercy? My only question is, do you fantasize about being the Wampa or the Sand Person? Or maybe a Tauntaun that likes it when Han shoves Luke all the way inside. You are a sick, sick animal.

I KNOW IT'S YOU, POWELL!! I KNEW IT WAS YOU THAT BROKE INTO MY PLACE AND PUT ALL MY HIGHLY PRIZED *STAR WARS* FIGURINES INTO SEXUAL POSITIONS! YOU DO NOT SEXUALLY MEDDLE WITH ANOTHER MAN'S COLLECTIBLE *STAR WARS* ACTION-FIGURE DIORAMA! HOW DARE YOU DEFILE MY HOLY RELICS WITH YOUR FILTHY DEFILEMENT!! YOU KNOW THE ONLY THINGS I LOVE ARE THE *STAR WARS* SAGA, BILL O'REILLY, AND HAIRY EURO PORN! WHEN YOU DIE YOU'RE GOING STRAIGHT TO HELL! YOU THINK IT'S OKAY TO MOCK IT LIKE THE HEATHEN YOU ARE! BUT I KNOW IT REALLY HAPPENED! LONG, LONG AGO IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY, JUST LIKE THE BIBLE SAYS! TWO BANTHAS HUMPING IS A NATURAL, GLORIOUS ACT OF NATURE, BUT WAMPAS DO NOT SCREW SAND PEOPLE! WAMPAS DO NOT SCREW SAND PEOPLE!

—DWIGHT

HORSEPOWER

It's a good time to be a fan of horror comics. If you're like me and you love all things spooky, you've probably noticed that Dark Horse is doing more to keep the genre of horror alive in comics than any other publisher right now. And it's no accident. In fact, it's a dark and nefarious plot, wrought by *Hellboy* editor Scott Allie and me, with a couple of our fellow editors in supporting roles.

One of the key elements of this plot is Steve Niles, a writer who burst into the limelight with the release of the miniseries *30 Days of Night* back in 2002. Steve's career took off like a bat out of Hell after that, and eventually he found his way back to Dark Horse. I say "back" because few people realize that Dark Horse was one of the first comics publishers to work with Steve, when we published a cool werewolf story called "Hairball"—starring a character named Cal McDonald—in a three-issue run of *Dark Horse Presents* more than a decade ago.

Steve has been really busy the last few years. Success in the comics industry led him to film options, screenwriting, and all sorts of fantastic opportunities that would distract most people from the lower-paying, less glamorous world of writing comics.

But that didn't happen with Steve. Instead, he turned into a kind of John Henry of comics. In one year I edited more than fifteen single issues written by Steve and published by Dark Horse, and at the same time he was being published by three or four other companies. It was more than a little ambitious, but somehow Steve managed to write some of his best work at that time, including *Freaks of the Heartland* and the *Criminal Macabre* series "Last Train to Deadsville," and both show a writer at the top of his game.

Things are a little quieter for Steve now, but just a little. The movies he wrote are now being filmed, and with most of his work with other publishers complete and making readers happy, he's focusing most of his writing time and attention on the books he publishes with Dark Horse. We had a great chat yesterday, and he told me the name of his next *Criminal Macabre* miniseries, "My Demon Baby."

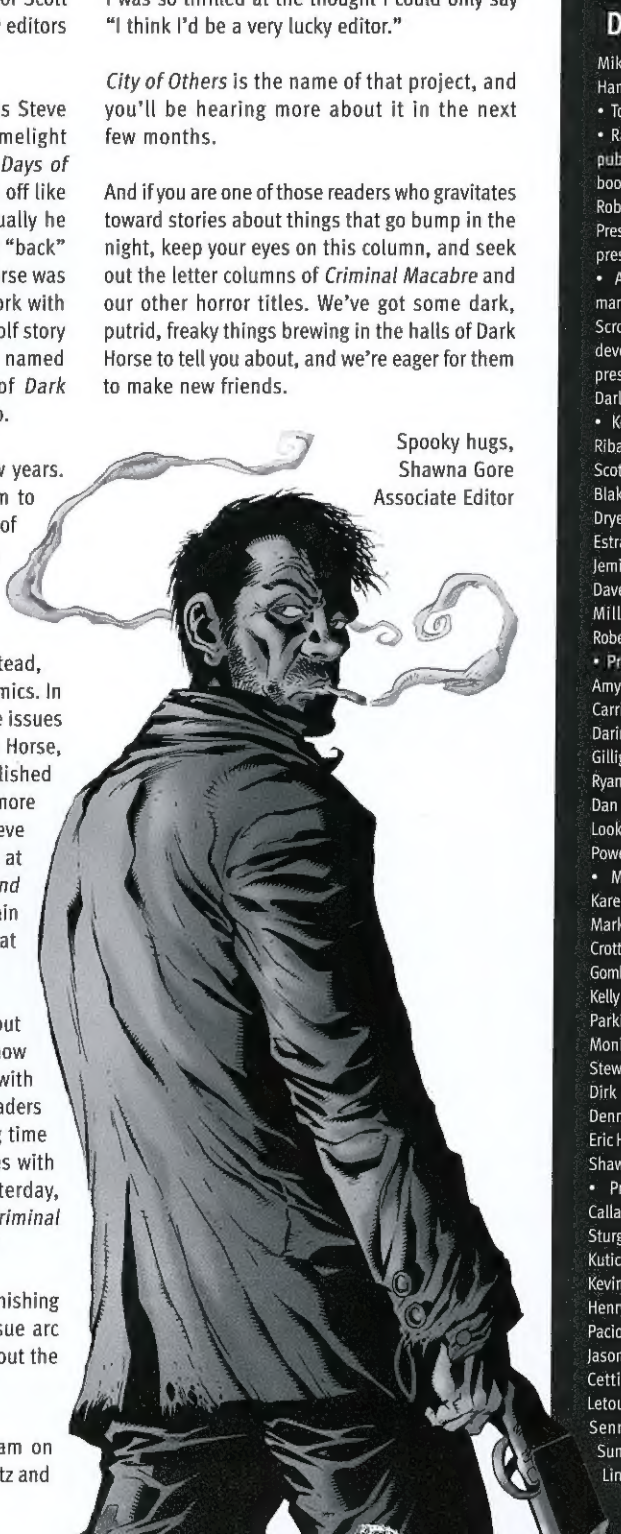
He launched into writing it the day after finishing issue four of "Two Red Eyes," a four-issue arc that should be on store shelves right about the time this is published.

We're lucky to have an amazing art team on *Criminal Macabre*—penciller/inker Kyle Hotz and our long-time colorist Michelle Madsen. They're both rock stars in their own right. And speaking of lucky, in another friendly chat I had with Steve about nine months ago, he asked what I'd think if he got a series lined up with the one guy we'd both been dying to work with, Bernie Wrightson. I was so thrilled at the thought I could only say "I think I'd be a very lucky editor."

City of Others is the name of that project, and you'll be hearing more about it in the next few months.

And if you are one of those readers who gravitates toward stories about things that go bump in the night, keep your eyes on this column, and seek out the letter columns of *Criminal Macabre* and our other horror titles. We've got some dark, putrid, freaky things brewing in the halls of Dark Horse to tell you about, and we're eager for them to make new friends.

Spooky hugs,
Shawna Gore
Associate Editor



DARK HORSE 20 YEARS

November 2006

Dark Horse Comics

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